The theologically inspired aetiologies of ancient Egypt ; the speculative enquiry into the origin and nature of religion which characterized Graeco-Roman society ; the establishment of Christianity, based on revelation through the Church and Bible ; the emergence of Islam, all formed the basis of religious history in Mediterranean and European cultures, leading to the change and widening of horizons brought about by the Renaissance, with the impact of the religions of India and China on European thought, forming the basis of later western thought.

Various traditions are treated separately, notably the Egyptian, Sumerian, Jewish and Christian, and there are other essays ranging over a number of religions and concerned with such subjects as 'Time as God and Devil' ; 'The Personification of Death' ; 'The Idea of the Soul ; 'The Judgement of the Dead'. While there are references to other religions, the material used is largely concerned with the Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and European traditions.

The author maintains that the work of the scholar should be first to acquire knowledge in his own field and secondly to disseminate it, both to the scholastic world and the intelligent layman. This he eminently succeeds in doing. A vein of deep human interest runs through all the essays ; an excellent bibliography provides further possibilities for the student and the book is well illustrated throughout.

J. C. COOPER.

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